

# Afghanistan **Freedom**

October 31, 2005

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan

# Watch

A photograph of a man with a mustache, wearing a light-colored patterned shirt, holding a baby wrapped in a brown cloth. They are standing in a dusty, outdoor environment with other people in the background.

## Disaster

How service members are pitching in to help the survivors of Pakistan's deadly earthquake

Page 8



Soldiers from Bagram Airfield's Blood Support Unit pose in front of an UH-60 Blackhawk. The BSU field tested the Blood Inventory Program, a system that tracks various types of blood in a given area. The BSU was recognized as the "Army Invention of the Year."

Photo by Army Spc. Lauren Adams, 591st Medical Logistic Detachment

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**Cover: A Pakistani man carries a baby past the rubble left in the town of Sawana after an earthquake in Pakistan. Coalition and NATO forces have contributed manpower and supplies toward the relief effort in the aftermath of the quake.**

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Ken Denny  
117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



## Afghanistan **Freedom** Watch

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CFC-A Commander - Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry  
Public Affairs Officer - Col. James R. Yonts

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### **Freedom Watch Staff**

Commander - Maj. T.G. Taylor  
NCOIC - Sgt. Matthew MacRoberts  
Editor - Sgt. James-Denton Wyllie  
Journalists - Staff Sgt. Ken Denny  
Sgt. Douglas DeMaio, Spc. Jason Krawczyk  
Spc. Tiffany Evans, Pfc. Vincent Fusco

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# Experience reawakens Airman's inner hero

**By Air Force Senior Airman Matthew Dillier**  
**Combined Forces Campaign-Afghanistan Public Affairs**

**KABUL, AFGHANISTAN** -- For some, joining the military brings the dream of playing G.I. Joe from the battlefields of the backyard to life. In my first few years of Air Force service, however, I didn't exactly feel like Gung-Ho, Roadblock or Snake Eyes.

The only time I chased Cobra Commander into the 'wild, blue yonder,' got into a fist fight with Destro or fired a gun that made weird laser sounds at Dr. Mindbender was from childhood memories long ago ... OK so it was a little more than 10 years ago, but that's not the point.

That all changed a few weeks ago during my deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom when I accepted an invitation to the firing range outside Kabul, Afghanistan.

A long line of vehicles made the turn up a dusty road and snaked their way up a rugged, sandy terrain. Piles of old Russian tanks were scattered about - remnants of a war not too long ago. Deep down, I could imagine seeing Blowtorch in those ruins.

The convoy sliced through the clouds of dust, trying desperately to stay on their path to my "battlefield." A few times, our four-wheel drive Landcruiser even seemed to catch a little air. Secretly, I thought Monkeywrench was out there trying to stop us.

After conquering the mountain's rugged road, we finally arrived. The doors flew open, and we scrambled around our Sgt. Slaughter (minus the huge muscles and raspy voice). He divided us into separate groups.

My group went to the German Maschinengewehr-3 machine gun, while the other encountered the German G-36 rifle. I stepped out of the gaggle when my turn came, knelt down in the sand and wrapped my hand around the grip of the gun. All I could think of was firing a shot or two at Storm Shadow.

The German instructor spoke a few words of English and gave me some pointers. All I needed to know was where the bad guys were. I knew these bullets with the red streaks would magically

find their target.

A few seconds later, I squeezed the trigger. The gun barked in rapid succession - "Bang! Bang! Bang!" I looked at the target, curious if I had hit it, or anything at all with in a five-foot radius. Instantly, I felt like Dusty pinned behind enemy lines.

After popping off a few more rounds, the instructor and I walked to the board to see how well I did, or in my case, to see if I had vanquished my childhood foe. Storm Shadow was dust.

I moved to the G-36 rifle as the instructor told me which targets were mine. In my child's mind's eye, they were the evil twins Tomax and Xamot. Looking through the scope, I focused down-range. I pulled the trigger and an instant later, an audible "bing" pierced the air. Fifteen shots later, the twins were no more.

Soon after, I took out Scrap Iron with a M-203 grenade launcher; put down Torch with the blast of a 12-gauge combat shotgun; silenced Ripper with an AK-47; and pulverized Zandar, Zarna and Zartan with the M-249 Squad Assault Weapon.

It was time to take care of the big man - the most evil snake emperor ever - OK, the only evil snake emperor ever - Serpentor.

I knelt down and picked up rounds for the mother-of-all weapons - the .50-caliber machine gun. I slung the rounds over my shoulders ala Rambo, sat down behind the formidable monstrosity of metal and loaded it.

The heat rose from the barrel as I got my sights on the elusive emperor. I pulled the trigger and sent the lead flying down range, forcing him from rock to rock. I had to succeed - the fate of the world hung in the balance.

With one bullet left, the emperor made his fatal mistake. Poking his head out, the last bullet raced down the barrel, connecting with its destined target and put to an end the dastardly plans of world domination.

As we drove off, I glanced in the side-view mirror at the huge cloud of dust in the air as it finally settled. After being called out of my 10-year childhood retirement, G.I. Joe had made the world safe, once again, from the evil forces of Cobra.



*An Afghan National Policeman physically separates Army Spcs. Dylan O'Sullivan (right) and Adriana Madigan during a training exercise designed to teach the proper use of force. O'Sullivan and Madigan are members of the 92nd Military Police Company out of Hanau, Germany, and taught the course Sept. 3 at the Lash Kar Gah Provincial Reconstruction Team compound.*

*Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Jacob Caldwell  
 Combined Task Force Bayonet Public Affairs*

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to [freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil).

Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

# SMA meets with service members

**By Army Pfc. Vincent Fusco**  
20th Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston met with service members Oct. 11 here as part of his visit to Afghanistan.

At a breakfast, Preston held an open forum on a variety of issues with lower-enlisted troops.

He answered questions regarding the advanced combat uniform, citing it as, "a combat uniform designed by Soldiers for Soldiers." He also discussed the subdued special-skill badges worn on the ACUs in garrison environments and during special ceremonies.

"It allows Soldiers to wear those badges when the occasion dictates, and allows commanders the flexibility to put Soldiers into uniforms better suited for a particular day," said Preston. "We're continuing to modify and change the uniform based on Soldiers' recommendations."

He also discussed the transformation of Army unit deployments that started last year. Also referred to as modularity, Preston described the change as a way to make units, "more expeditionary, relevant and ready, the force a commander needs on the ground."

Preston pointed out how the size and structure of the Army has basically not changed since the Cold War. To keep up with the needs of the Global War on Terror, the number of brigade combat teams will be increased from 33 to 43.

"Look at all the deployments," said Preston. "There are a lot of units out there, and a lot of you in here who have done back-to-back deployments."

Units typically have about one year of "dwell time" before being deployed to another combat zone. For many Soldiers and their families, frequent deployments during the Global War on Terror have raised concerns about their future in the military.

"Transformation is all about predictability," said Preston. "We want to provide more predictability and more stability for Soldiers and their families."

Ten new brigades are being created in the Army, each with a "life cycle" of pro-



Photo by Army Pfc. Vincent Fusco

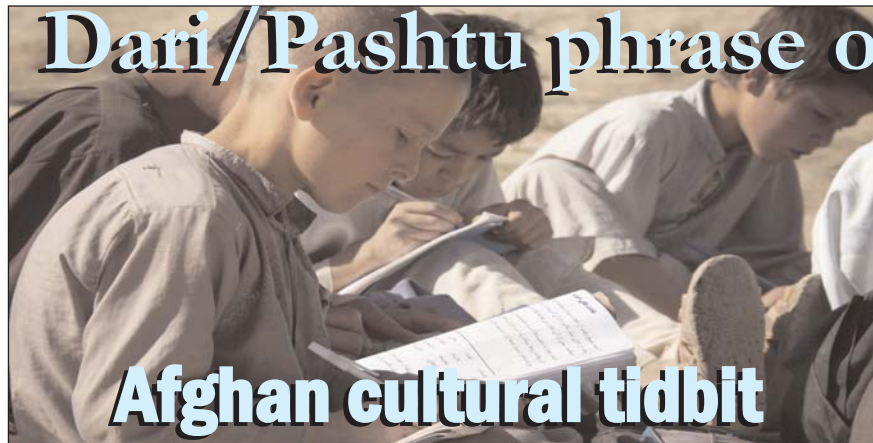
**Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston speaks with troops during breakfast at Bagram Airfield Oct. 11**

grammed deployments.

The central goal of transformation is to allow Soldiers at least two years of dwell time between deployments, said Preston, and provide Soldiers and their families with a predictable schedule of deployments.

Preston concluded his breakfast by encouraging the Soldiers in attendance to "be safety vigilant" when returning home from their deployments, and to "take their Army story back home to share it with your fellow Soldiers."

## Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



### Afghan cultural tidbit

Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week:

**Can you take medicines while fasting?**

**Dari**

Aya shoma dar Ramazan Tawa Mikhori?

(Aya sho-ma dar Ram-azan Ta-wa Mi-kho-ri?)

**Pashtu**

Aya Toso PaRoja kai Tawa khory shay?

(Aya To-so Pa-Roja kai Ta-wa kho-ry sh-ay?)

According to Islamic religion, not only is Ramadan a month of "moral abstinence," it is also a month to work on creating new bonds of understanding between classes of people. Fasting is practiced by the rich and poor, and with the intent to help remind the more fortunate, through hunger pains, what the poor suffer. The period of Ramadan is also intended for Muslims to seek forgiveness for their past sins and to remind them that all are created equal in Allah's sight.



# Afghan Army school tops out

**By Army Sgt.**

**Mason T. Lowery**

**Office Security of  
Cooperation- Afghanistan  
Public Affairs**

**KABUL, Afghanistan** - Soldiers at the Afghan National Army's Driver and Mechanic School celebrated the construction of a new staff building recently with a "Topping Out" ceremony attended by German and American soldiers, contractors and Afghan construction workers.

Topping out ceremonies are an important tradition in construction projects.

The customs of the ceremony vary from country to country, but the meaning behind the ceremony is the same -- growth, patriotism and progress.

The ceremony occurs when the highest steel beam is put

into place, signifying the structure has reached its highest point.

The steel beam is decorated with the national flag and a pine tree.

The flag signifies patriotism and the pine tree represents life and growth of the building. The Afghans substituted a flower bouquet for the pine tree.

The new building and facilities are being built by Oldhorster, Handels and Bau - a German construction company -- for \$1 million. Construction of a dining facility and dormitories will start next spring.

Eighty percent of OHB's construction workers are Afghans.

They received training and certification in trades, as well as guarantees of employment for future construction projects

with OHB, said Ibrahim Aytar, OHB business development director.

Many of them are former members of the Afghan Militia Forces who have been employed under the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration process.

At the school, the German Armed Forces Technical Advisory Group trains ANA soldiers to properly operate and take care of their vehicles.

The GAFTAG personnel work with members of the Office of Security Cooperation - Afghanistan, providing classes in driver and automotive maintenance training.

The first course is designed to teach the soldiers advanced driving techniques and also serves to recruit future instructors for the course.

The second course trains Afghan soldiers to attain a high

level of proficiency as automotive mechanics.

"We know, based on vehicle accidents and damage, that this school is important," said German Army Lt. Col. Gerhard Faustmann, the attaché to the German Embassy in Kabul.

The school will train 90 driver and mechanic students per class when it reaches full capacity by October of next year.

Brig. Gen. Mohammad Nazir, ANA General Staff Force Management deputy director, explained the long-term importance of the school and how it will impact the ANA.

"Students will take what they learn here and apply it at their units. Thank you to the Germans and Americans," he said.

## Enduring Voices

**If you could change one thing about the military uniform or regulations regarding its wear, what would it be?**



**Army Spc. Jayra Douglass,**  
F Company, 159th Aviation  
Regiment

*"I don't think we should have to pay for all the extras on our uniforms."*



**Army Capt. Nicholas Hodge,**  
Task Force Alamo

*"We need one standard for all, regardless of job or station."*



**Army Sgt. John Benoit,**  
Task Force Saber

*"The regulations regarding the wear of cold weather gear should be more clear."*



**Army Maj. Maureen Fry,**  
Ghanzi Provincial  
Reconstruction Team,  
Civil Affairs Team B

*"We need to get practical about uniforms and tailor them to the environments we work in."*

Air Force Senior Airman Derek Erickson, a pavement and equipment journeyman with the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., uses an internal concrete "vibe" to get rid of air bubbles in freshly-poured concrete on the newest section of the aircraft parking ramp at Bagram Airfield.



Photo by Air Force Capt. James H. Cunningham, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs.



# RED HORSE team improves war-fighting capability

**By Air Force Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald**  
**455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs**

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - Aircraft parking space used in fighting the Global War on Terrorism is getting a boost from the ground up as a team of engineers removes and replaces 60,000-square meters of Bagram Airfield's ramp space.

Once complete, the \$4.4 million airfield construction project will provide U.S. and Coalition aircraft that support Operation Enduring Freedom a better place to park, according to Air Force Capt. Todd Williams, officer in charge of Bagram's detachment of the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. RED HORSE is an acronym for Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers.

"Our RED HORSE team is removing the Soviet steel planking that currently covers the site," said Williams, a native of Roanoke, Va. "Following this, we'll excavate two to four feet of soil, prepare a new base for concrete, and place 20-inch-thick concrete slabs for the new ramp."

Both fixed and rotary-winged aircraft will benefit from the RED HORSE project.

"Although this ramp space was designed to withstand the load of Air Force medium-load, fixed-wing aircraft such as the C-17, rotary-winged aircraft will be able to use it as well," Williams said. "Up to this point, the U.S. Army has been using the ramp primarily to park their helicopters."

Air Force Staff Sgt. David Famigiletti, a pavement and heavy equipment operator for the RED HORSE detachment, said he enjoys how he's spending his time here.

"My job allows me to see something that needs improvement, and from start to finish, see it evolve into a finished product that someone can use," said Famigiletti, a native of Waterbury, Conn. "I'm glad to do my part in supporting Bagram's flying mission."



**Air Force Senior Airman Paul Lefevre, pavement and heavy equipment operator, spreads freshly-poured concrete on the newest section of aircraft parking ramp.**



**Air Force Staff Sgt. Joel Kennedy, pavement and equipment craftsman, directs concrete as it's poured on the newest section of the aircraft parking ramp. The 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., is adding an additional 60,000-square meters of aircraft ramp space as part of a \$4.4-million Bagram Airfield upgrade project in support of the Global War on Terrorism.**

Photos by Air Force Capt. James H. Cunningham, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs.



# Earthquake relief

## Victims of Pakistan's biggest earthquake in its history receive help from the Coalition, NATO service members

**By Army Staff Sgt. Ken Denny**  
*117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan -- Soldiers and Airmen from Bagram and Kandahar airfields, combined under Task Force Griffin to assist the victims of the recent earthquake in Pakistan Oct. 9.

Oct. 8 started out like any other day across Pakistan, but before nine a.m. much of Northern Pakistan lay in ruins after an earthquake measuring magnitude of 7.6 destroyed most of the infrastructure of the communities in these mountainous regions.

The U.S. responded quickly with Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan mobilizing several aviation units into Task Force Griffin, sending five CH-47 Chinooks and three UH-60 Blackhawks to evacuate the injured, transport rescue workers and air lift aid supplies to the people of Pakistan.

Following the helicopters, in the early morning hours of Oct. 10, a C-17 and its crew from the 7th Airlift Squadron from McChord Air Force Base delivered 12 pallets of supplies -- almost 90,000 pounds of food, water, medical supplies and blankets -- from Bagram to Chaklala International Airport in Islamabad, Pakistan. The delivery was the first of many as the United States mobilized to help its partner in the War on Terror in the region.

"This C-17 was diverted from its original flight plan to fly humanitarian aid to Pakistan," said Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Steven Martin, loadmaster superintendent, 137th Air Wing, Oklahoma National Guard. "This is a historic and significant event. I have worked a lot of relief efforts before, nothing as significant as this. This is our war. This is what we do and what we do best."

"Just 48 hours ago, Task Force Griffin was conducting combat operations in Afghanistan,

they were able to break contact and move completely to another country to provide humanitarian operations as a transitional expeditionary force," said Army Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, CFC-A commanding general.

Afghanistan also provided four Mi-17 helicopters to the effort, a historic event in itself, said Eikenberry.

Within 48 hours of the tragedy, aid began to arrive from more than 10 different nations. Airplanes began to line up on the tarmac to be unloaded by a U.S. Air Force crew flown in to start the process.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Larry Mansell, of the 355th Air Expeditionary Group Aerial Port Ramp was excited about his role as being one of the first U.S. troops on the ground to help in the aid mission.

"I feel honored to be on this mission. This is a great opportunity to help another nation," he said.

Pakistan Air Force Capt. Shafiq Shafi watched the unloading of the first U.S. C-17 to arrive. "If this disaster has one benefit, it is to bring nations together. Enemies and friends will come together to help the people of Pakistan."

According to Shafi, nations were quick to respond, within two days military cargo planes from the United States, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Russia, Iran, China and India had arrived with needed aid.

Rescue teams from Japan, Britain, France, Germany and Russia also began to arrive and were awaiting their turn to get out into the villages.

The humanitarian effort was truly international as rescue teams raced to Pakistan.

See Quake, page 10





A woman asks for water after being transported by an U.S. Army CH-47 from Muzaffarabad, Oct. 13. Over 5,000 casualties were evacuated from outlying areas into the Islamabad International Airport in the first week of operations.

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Ken Denny



**From Quake, page 8**

"We are prepared to go anywhere in the world in 24 hours," said Alexi Avdeev, of the Central Air Mobility Rescue Team, part of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defense, whose team of more than 40 doctors, nurses and rescue personnel sat in the hot sun awaiting their turn for flights. "We were probably the closest team in the region. We are happy to offer our services," he said.

In hard hit Muzaffarabad, thousands of Pakistanis are homeless and rescue teams were overwhelmed with transporting supplies and, on return flights, flying out the casualties.

"Our first flight into Muzaffarabad was a shock to all of us," said German Army Lt. Col. Marcus Bodefeld of the International Security and Assistance Forces in Afghanistan. "We unloaded food and tents and our surgical team --

but were overwhelmed with the number of casualties."

Bodefeld's first helicopter out of Muzaffarabad brought out 75 injured alone. "We loaded the aircraft as full as we possibly could each and every trip," said Bodefeld.

Residents of Muzaffarabad were equally shocked in the aftermath, according to one resident, Ijaz Hamad, who was working to clear debris from his home, "I came out of my house. I was afraid of what had happened. This house," he said, pointing to a pile of rubble, "the home of an army major, I heard a voice but only had my empty hands to dig with. I couldn't bring them out of the house."

Hamad saved the major's wife and son but the army major and his daughter had died.

The hardest hit area was the disputed Kashmir area in Northern Pakistan. In

the village of Sawana five miles from the Indian border, the Pakistan Army maintains an outpost. "Almost 6,000 people have died and 4,000 are seriously injured," said Lt. Col. Nasir, commander of the Pakistan Army in the area.

Medical Assistant Munir Sumda of the Pakistan Army said he and the army Dr. (Capt.) Amar Saad had treated more than 2,000 people.

"I am tired, very, very tired," he said.

Helicopter pilots and crews from the United States responded to the mission on a personal level.

Navy Lt. Commander Chris Brown, MH-54 Sea Stallion pilot, Detachment 2 Fifth Fleet, said "We were called on Monday and were ready to go on Tuesday. We flew across Iranian airspace 13 hours to get here," he said. "Our deployment time is normally 72 hours, we were here in 71. My crew just lost a

**See Quake, page 11**



**A young girl, injured when a school collapsed in Sawana, is carried aboard a German MH-54 helicopter for evacuation to Islamabad.**



### From Quake, page 10

crewmember in a training accident a few days before we left. All of the crew feels that what we are doing here we are doing for him."

Brown's crew had a mission to fly to villages north of Monsarat and south of Balikot but had to turn around due to weather. But not wanting to return to Islamabad, they started going to unnamed villages. "We tried to land in a village; people started swarming the aircraft so we lifted off and just started pushing stuff out of the aircraft. We found other villages where we would hover next to the hillsides and push stuff out of the aircraft."

Some service members had unique talents to help with the relief mission.

Army Cpl. Amit Ranadey, D Company, 113th Aviation Regiment, is fluent in several languages from the region including: Urdu, Indi, Punjabi and Gujarati.

Born in India, his family still speaks the languages found in Pakistan. "English was more of a second language," he said. "I want to help. I feel really good doing this." Ranadey assisted crew members as they distributed supplies to the victims. "They really appreciate us out there," he said.

Other TF Griffin crewmembers had both good and bad experiences in dealing with the Pakistani people, but were still completely devoted to what they were doing.

Some villages had gone without food, shelter or medical attention for several

days and people were getting desperate, according to Army Sgt. Dean Schedes, F Company, 159th Aviation Regiment.

"We're doing our best to carry out good missions," he said. "We landed in a village close to Balikot and there was a riot. Hundreds of people massed around the aircraft and it was turning dangerous for crewmembers.

"It was terrible, it was the first aircraft they had seen in days," he said.

Schedes said he felt proud of what they were doing there.

"The best thing is bringing the casualties back," he said. "I consider it something that needs to be done and I'm glad I'm part of it, and really grateful for the crew."

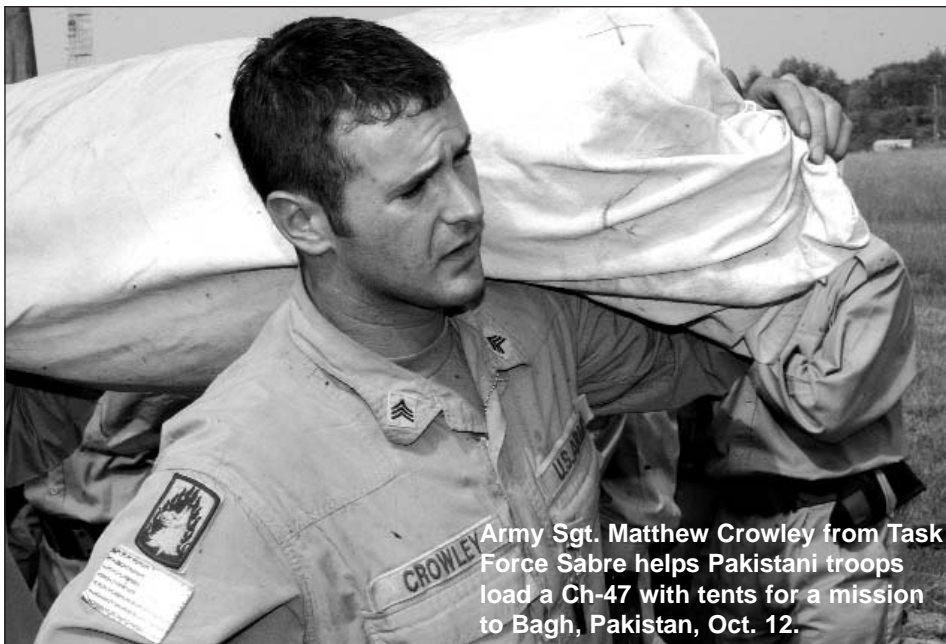
Tons of equipment and supplies were flown in by the United States, said Air Force 1st Lt. Erick Saks, 305th Air Mobility Wing from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. U.S. C-17s, C-130s and KC-10s had brought in over 740,000 pounds of cargo. Of that, 50,000 pounds was Halal food packs.

"This amounts to 115,000 individual meals," he said. Almost all of that cargo was distributed to villages and towns throughout Northern Pakistan by helicopter and truck.

By the fifth day of operations, over 5,000 casualties had been brought into Chaklala International Airport by helicopter. Most of those were evacuated to local hospitals. Some were evacuated to hospitals in Iran, United Arab Emirates and India, said Pakistan Army Maj. Gen. Javed Aslem Tahir.

On Oct. 12, the 818th Contingency Response Group from McGuire Air Force Base arrived after being deployed to New Orleans for hurricane Katrina relief.

They were able to provide communications, equipment and infrastructure to sustain U.S. troops and provide 24-hour continuous operations to the Pakistan government, said Navy Rear Admiral Michael A. Lefever, commander, Expeditionary Strike Group One, CENTCOM's commander of the Pakistan operation. "The United States will continue to help the Pakistan government until the job is done."



Army Sgt. Matthew Crowley from Task Force Sabre helps Pakistani troops load a Ch-47 with tents for a mission to Bagh, Pakistan, Oct. 12.



German surgeons triage a patient in the village of Sawana, Pakistan, Oct. 13.





Photos by Army Spc. Tiffany Evans, 20th Public Affairs Detachment



# Afghans and Americans work together, complete a successful MEDCAP mission

**By Army Spc. Tiffany Evans**  
20th Public Affairs Detachment

**QALAT, Afghanistan** - A Combined Joint Task Force-76 Cooperative Medical Assistance mission was held at the site of the new Qalat Provincial Hospital Oct. 2 to 5.

"The Qalat mission was part of a larger picture of medical capacity building, which CJTF-76 is doing throughout the area of operation," said Army Dr. (Lt. Col.) Edward Michaud, CMA director, Surgeon Cell.

"In a country where personal hygiene and a healthy diet aren't practiced every

day, many people get sick and become malnourished," said Army Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mark Martinez, CMA veterinarian, Surgeon Cell.

The lack of personal hygiene is a cause for the spread of worms, which is a main cause of malnutrition in Afghanistan, said Martinez.

"To help curb the problem with personal hygiene, interpreters taught basic personal-hygiene skills," said Army Sgt. Abbi Hoffpauir, medic, 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment Texas, Army National Guard.

As the Afghans entered the hospital, their first stop was a hygiene class where they received a bag of hygiene products after the class was finished, said Hoffpauir.

On the men's side, two American providers controlled patient flow and helped to see patients when needed. The four main providers -- Dr. Amin from the Afghan National Army, Dr. Sadat from the Afghan National Police, Dr. Hamid from the medical group IbnSina, and the Zabul Province Director of Health Dr. Zahir Shah treated patients.

Afghanistan Minister of Health Mohamad Amin Fatimee visited on the last day to tour the hospital, said Army Maj. John Drobnica a physician's assistant in the 46th Medical Detachment.

Fatimee's wife, Dr. Gudul, came a few hours during each day to see female patients.

During the week on the women's side, IbnSina gave immunizations. Children, two years old and younger, were given the diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus shot, said Drobnica. Women 15 and older received a tetanus shot.

On the second day of the mission, members of the 126th Forward Surgical Team visited the hospital.

"We were there to provide consultation and referral for general and orthopedic surgery at either the Qalat FST or the Qalat Hospital," said Army Dr. (Lt. Col.) Colin Miller, orthopedic surgeon, 126th

FST.

American and Afghan surgeons will perform a few of these surgeries together, said Miller. Many of the patients' problems were broken bones that didn't heal properly because they hadn't been set correctly or had not been set at all.

Helping to improve the health care given to Afghans is a mission that is succeeding throughout the country, thanks to missions like the one in Qalat, said Michaud.

Since the Coalition has been in Afghanistan, medical training has improved and the technology is being updated, said Amin. Missions like this, will help the Afghan people to trust their own doctors, by seeing it first hand.

"Since the Coalition has come to my country, our level in health care and training has seen a rise," said Amin. "During the Taliban rule, about 1,800 people would die every month, now it's about 1,800 people a year."



**Women and children from Qalat wait to be seen by female health care providers.**

## Captions for photos, opposite page

**Clockwise, from top:**

**Army Maj. William Mclagan, an information officer with Combined Joint Task Force-76 J3, squirts deworming medicine in boys mouth.**

**Dr. Amin, Afghan National Army, listens as the Assitant of Agriculture for the Zabul Province, Haji Mohammad Kajir describes his symptoms.**

**Army Dr. (Lt. Col.) Colin Miller, an orthopedic surgeon with the 126th Foward Surgical Team, examines a girl to see if she's a good candidate for surgery. For the last two years the girl has been losing the strength in her legs.**

**A Kuchi baby boy who suffered sever trauma at birth makes faces while his mother discusses his conditions with doctors.**

**An Afghan doctor's assistant cleans the hands of a boy suffering from an infection.**

# CNO speaks out on meeting the challenge of a new era

**By Chief of Naval Operations**  
**Office of Naval Public Affairs**

**WASHINGTON** - Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Mullen released his 2006 Guidance for the Navy Oct. 14.

Mullen's guidance outlines his top three priorities, his specific objectives to address those priorities, and what he expects from each Sailor to achieve his vision.

Underpinning his guidance -- which is rooted in the framework of Sea Power 21 -- are his top priorities: sustained combat readiness, building a fleet for the future and developing 21st century leaders.

Mullen said that of all the challenges the Navy faces, building the future fleet is the biggest. Specifically, he pointed out that the 2006 budget currently in Congress calls for only four ships, and he is not "anxious to stay there."

He addressed this and his other two priorities by outlining seven specific objectives ranging from continuing support in the war on terrorism, determining the proper size of the future fleet, continuing to execute Sea Warrior and other ongoing manpower and personnel transformational efforts that will help the Navy.

The guidance includes 10 "Guiding Principles" -- warfighting, people, team-

work, jointness, leadership, accountability and integrity, alignment, risk management, commitment to change and effects-based thinking -- that he says must "guide and inform our actions every day."

"Our success in defense of this nation depends upon the men and women of the United States Navy -- active, reserve and civilian, and their families," Mullen wrote.

He also pointed out that he doesn't talk about people without including diversity.

"I believe we have to have people from and for every part of our Navy, and we've done well, but we can do better in my view," he said.

CNO also stressed the importance of naval teamwork and joint operations. He called the Navy and Marine Corps team a "national treasure," but added that while naval forces bring to the fight unique maritime and expeditionary prowess, they are "only as good as the contribution we make to the overall effort."

Of all of Mullen's guiding principles, leadership at every level remained a central theme. "Everything starts and ends with leadership," CNO wrote. "Nothing else we accomplish, no other priority we pursue, is of much consequence if we do not have sound and effective leadership in place to enact it."

"Every Sailor in the Navy should share an understanding of our vision and mission," he wrote, "and be able to describe how he or she contributes to them."

Mullen wrote that success in today's uncertain security environment demands that "we continue to transform the way we think, operate and fight," he explained.

In summing up his guidance, Mullen said the Navy is in great shape, readiness is high and maintenance is getting done faster and more efficiently than ever before. "But," he added, "we cannot meet the challenges of this new era simply by sustaining today's readiness and requirements. Our adversaries will not rest; our friends and allies cannot wait."

He said that the Navy must continue to transform, recapitalize and modernize.

Mullen wrote that it is impossible to foresee, or to fully comprehend, all the challenges the Navy will face. "But by building a balanced force that is resilient and adaptable, with the depth of capabilities required to meet the demands of a multi-mission, multitask environment, we can mitigate against this uncertainty."

"I am proud to face these challenges with you, and look forward to our shared success."

## Fisher House distributes airline tickets to wounded service members

**By Rudi Williams**  
**American Forces Press Service**

**WASHINGTON** - Wounded service members and their families can get a free ticket home through "Operation Hero Miles."

The Fisher House organization uses more than a million frequent flyer miles per week to distribute free round-trip airline tickets to war-wounded service members -- as well as their family members -- being treated in military and Veterans Affairs medical facilities across the country.

To date, the program has distributed more than 4,000 tickets, using more than 150 million frequent flyer miles, said Jim Weiskopf, a Fisher House Foundation spokesman.

He said the foundation's general fundraising, including money received from the Combined Federal Campaign, pays airport security fees, taxes and administrative fees on the tickets so there is no charge to the families.

Fisher House, a nonprofit organization that builds homes near and on the grounds of large military and Veterans Affairs medical facilities, receives millions of frequent flyer miles

through "Operation Hero Miles."

The program took off in 2004 after U.S. Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, D-Maryland, convinced U.S. airlines to provide free round-trip airline tickets for service members arriving from Iraq and Afghanistan for rest-and-recuperation leave.

The congressman challenged the airlines to start the program because he was worried about the financial burden on troops.

The program has been expanded to wounded service members being treated at major military and Veterans Affairs medical centers across the country.

Those who have approved convalescent leave may be given a free round-trip airline ticket to visit loved ones if they're not eligible for government-funded airfare.

Family members are also eligible for the free tickets.

The tickets are distributed through the Fisher House Foundation to recuperating service members who must be near a hospital for continuing treatment. Families visiting loved ones in hospitals can stay in Fisher House homes at no cost.

Requests for tickets must originate from a service member and be forwarded to Fisher House by a hospital social work staff member, family assistance center or service casualty office.



# "So that others may live"



Photos by Air Force Capt. Al Yeh, 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron

A HH-60G Pavehawk combat rescue helicopter containing members of the 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron taxis down the runway before take-off. The motto of the ERQS is, "These things we do, so that others may live."

The 129th and 131st Rescue Squadrons from Moffett Field, Cali., deployed as the 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (ERQS) and took over the reins of the combat rescue alert mission on Sept. 1, 2005.

Since their arrival, the National Guardsmen have completed 20 combat rescue saves.



Members of the 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.



A 59th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron rescue helicopter generates "brown-out" conditions during descent into a dusty landing zone. "Brown out" occurs when a helicopter's rotors stir up dirt into a cloud that envelops the aircraft.

*Freedom Watch*

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**“War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature, and has no chance of being free unless made or kept so by the exertions of better men than himself. “**

**John Stuart Mill**